

REMARKS

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 20 are amended by adding the further descriptor “as a bottoms”, derived from the specification as filed at, for example, paragraph [0036]. No new matter is added.

Section 102 Rejection

Claims 1-6, 11, 16 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Gorin et al.* (U.S. 2,456,584). The Applicants traverse.

Claims 1 and 20 include the feature “distilling the dried olefin stream to separate the dimethyl ether and propane as a bottoms from the propylene.” Applicant contends that this step is not disclosed or suggested in *Gorin*.

In particular, *Gorin* describes the separation of liquid hydrocarbons from lighter hydrocarbons, water and dimethylether. The relevant features of this process are described by *Gorin* at column 5, line 39 to column 6, line 50. First, the entire mixture of light and liquid hydrocarbons with dimethylether is cooled and condensed, followed condensing. This condensed liquid is sent to a “settler 50” and very light components are released as a gas, and the water (containing dimethyl ether and some methanol) is withdrawn from the settler. The “non-aqueous” portion of what is left in the settler is then passed to a heater and fractionated in “fractionating system 60.” The product of this fractionation is then withdrawn for production of motor oil. The light fractions pass overhead and “eliminated from the system through valved line 67.” This later portion contains light hydrocarbons (e.g., propane and propylene) as well as residual dimethylether. There is no disclosure of separating, or “distilling” the propylene from the dimethyl ether and propane.

In a particular aspect, such as described in paragraph [0036] of Applicant's specification, the propane and dimethyl ether are drawn from distillation as a bottoms (or bottom portion, relative to the top or top half of a distillation column), while propylene is drawn from the top. This is in contrast to the teaching in *Gorin* of having all three of these components drawn off the top of a fractionator. Thus, Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Section 103 Rejection

Claims 7-10, 14, 15, 17, 19-21 and 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Gorin*. Also, claims 22-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Gorin* in view of admitted prior art. Finally, claims 12, 13, 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Gorin* in view of *Kuechler et al.* (U.S. 6,121,504). The Applicants traverse.

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicant contends that the claims 1 and 20, hence the claims dependent thereon, are not obvious. Further, Applicant cannot find in *Kuechler* a disclosure equivalent to claims 12, 13, 27 and 28. These claims are describing, in essence, a further removal of dimethyl ether from a hydrocarbon by washing with water, and also a recycle of dimethyl ether to a molecular sieve catalyst. These rejections in particular should be withdrawn, as there simply is no disclosure in *Gorin* or *Kuechler* to these elements. In fact, there is no mention in either of these cases of the desire to isolate dimethyl ether for any further processing. In any case, due to the allowability of claims 1 and 20, Applicant requests that all of the Section 103 rejections be withdrawn.

Applicants believe that the foregoing is a full and complete response to the Office Action of record. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present claims meet all the requirements for patentability. Accordingly, an early and favorable reconsideration of the rejection, and allowance of the pending claims is requested.

U.S. Appl. No. 10/511,241
Attorney Docket No.: 2001B126B
Amendment dated July 14, 2009
Reply to Office Action of May 29, 2009

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Applicant's Deposit Account No. 05-1712 (Docket #: 2001B126B), for any fees, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, required to make this response timely and acceptable to the Office.

Respectfully submitted,

July 14, 2009

Date

/ Kevin M. Faulkner /

Kevin M. Faulkner
U.S. Registration No. 45,427
ExxonMobil Chemical Company
Law Technology
P.O. Box 2149
Baytown, Texas 77522-2149
(281) 834-5933 Office
(281) 834-2495 Facsimile